DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 398 590 CS 215 441

AUTHOR Saunders, Pearl I.
TITLE A Pilot Program: Portfolio-Based Instruction in Developmental or Pre-college Writing Courses.
PUB DATE Aug 96
NOTE 60p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Basic Writing; Course Descriptions; *English Instruction; Instructional Effectiveness; Pilot Projects; *Portfolio Assessment; Portfolios (Background Materials); Research Needs; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *Basic Writers; Saint Louis Community College at Forest Park MO

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses a "basic" writing pilot program using portfolio-based instruction in two-year college English courses at the St. Louis Community College at Forest Park (Missouri). The first section of the paper offers a comprehensive overview of the benefits of portfolio-based instruction to students, teachers, and the "basic" writing courses. The second section of the paper presents a detailed description of the pilot program, and concludes that portfolio-centered instruction is a viable alternative to traditional instructional approaches in "basic" writing courses. The paper concludes with two recommendations: design a longitudinal study that keeps track of the students in the pilot program; and design a study that compares portfolio-based instruction to standard process instruction. Appendices present course outlines, campus goals, portfolio contents, feedback forms, a 51-item bibliography, a glossary, and a course evaluation form. (RS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 398 990

A PILOT PROGRAM: PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION IN DEVELOPMENTAL OR PRE-COLLEGE WRITING COURSES

BY

Pearl I. Saunders, Ph.D.
Professor of English
St. Louis Community College at Forest Park
St. Louis, MO

August 1996

CS 215441

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION IN WRITING COURSES 1

Background *1*
A. Benefits to Basic Writers *1*
B. Benefits to Teachers *3*
C. Benefits to a Writing Program *4*
D. Curricular Changes *6*
E. Criticisms *6*

II. DESCRIPTION OF PILOT PROGRAM: PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH 020 & 030 8

Purpose *8*
A. Rationale *8*
B. Objectives *9*
C. Procedure for Implementation *10*
D. Conclusion *22*
E. Recommendations *23*

III. APPENDIX

A. Forest Park's English 020 & 030 Outline A-1
B. Forest Park's 1995-96 Campus Goals (Goal III) B-1
C. Portfolio Contents C-1
D. Feedback Forms D-1
E. Bibliography E-1
F. Glossary F-1
G. Pilot Program Evaluation Form G-1

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful to my husband, Roy, for challenging me to be the "best"; to my sons, Mel and Barr, for sparking my imagination; and to my friend and colleague, Professor Sidney Reedy (Florissant Valley Campus) for encouraging and nurturing my professional maturity.

P.S.

SUMMARY

This "basic" writing pilot program, **"Portfolio-based Instruction in English 020 and 030,"** provides a viable pedagogical alternative to our current traditional-centered process approach. Designed as a teaching-learning ancillary, this project gives a comprehensive overview of the benefits of portfolio-based instruction to students, teachers, and the "basic" writing courses. A detailed description of the pilot program follows, along with a conclusion and two recommendations for further study. It ends with appendices filled with several teaching-learning resources.

AN OVERVIEW: PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION IN WRITING COURSES

AN OVERVIEW: PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION IN WRITING COURSES

BACKGROUND

In an attempt to serve the diverse needs of the two-year college student, English instructors have always explored varying pedagogical approaches (Black 9-10). One of the most recent experimentation entails the use of portfolios in the "basic" writing courses. That is, extensive curricular changes are occurring in English Departments because of the overwhelming evidence that suggests the benefits of portfolio-centered instruction to students, teachers, and the writing program. To understand the implications of this trend, it is necessary to examine these questions:

1. *How does portfolio-based instruction address the needs of "basic" writers?*
2. *How does portfolio-based instruction help English instructors serve "basic" writers' needs?*
3. *How does portfolio-based instruction enhance a writing program designed specifically for "basic" writers"?*
4. *What instructional practices have prompted curricular changes in writing programs designed specifically for "basic" writers?*
5. *What are the major criticisms of a portfolio-based instructional writing program?*

A. BENEFITS OF PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION TO "BASIC" WRITERS

Portfolio-based instruction is one pedagogical alternative to a traditional-centered process because it restructures classroom procedures to encourage students' progress in writing and to engage them in active learning.

According to research, students derive these benefits from a portfolio-centered instructional program. This approach

1. Helps students to see "writing as involving recursive processes of critical thinking, expression, rethinking, and revision"(Harrison 3).

2. Forces students to make several writing choices as they work on their papers: brainstorming, drafting, listening to peers' and instructor's comments, revising, and editing until the paper is completed (Baker 156-157, Black 14).

3. Empowers students to emphasize their learning process, evaluate their competencies, and reveal their learning over time. That is, it gives students "the chance to take responsibility for their own work by giving them the opportunity to choose, evaluate, revise, and compile a presentation of their 'best' writing" (Aitken 30).

4. Encourages "... students to revise more often and more extensively, thus resulting in higher quality student work" (Wauters 3).

5. Encourages students "to take constructive criticism from their teachers and classmates more seriously since they have that option of using that criticism in revising their work" (Black 48).

6. Grants "students a large measure of control over their work... In giving them essential ownership of it, ... students are treated as genuine writers. ... When treated as genuine writers and given significant choices, students gain self-confidence both as writers and persons, develop critical and evaluative skills, and become more independent" (Black 48-49).

7. Encourages students to revise because it "suggests that writing [improvement] occurs over time, not in a single sitting, just as the portfolio itself grows overtime and cannot be created in a single sitting" (Sommers, 1991: 153-154).

8. Gives students the invaluable opportunity to produce multiple drafts of each assignment with revisions based on feedback from the instructor and peers (Elbow & Belanoff,1986a: 95).

9. Motivates students to display a more positive attitude toward writing and an increased willingness to revise their papers (Baker 157; Murphy & Smith 1-3).

10. Provides "a diagnostic window on the students' affective learning in terms of how flexible and persistent students are in developing their writing in response to suggested prewriting strategies, teacher feedback on previous essays, goal setting, and their own writing improvements over a number of assignments" (Stern 1-2).

B. BENEFITS OF PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION TO TEACHERS

Portfolio-centered instruction helps the English teacher in addressing the diverse needs of our "unprepared" students in several ways. This instructional strategy

1. Allows teachers to emphasize students' progress by deferring grades, using formative comments, and offering them advice about specific revisions before a paper is submitted as part of the portfolio and about what the students might wish to concentrate on for the next paper.

2. Changes the role of the instructor from a grader who reads papers, marks errors, comments on strengths and weaknesses, assigns a grade, records the grade, and uses the grade on discrete tasks as part of the student's course and academic record to a facilitator, a guide, a coach, a mentor (Baker 156-57).

3. Allows instructors to defer grading; thus, the teacher-as-grader role is secondary to that of teacher-as-instructor, or a writing coach is secondary to that of teacher-as-instructor, or a writing professional trying to help writers achieve their goals (Baker 157-59; Sommers 153-64).

4. Helps instructors focus more on the students' texts than on grades, for if all the texts are revised, then all grades before the final submission are tentative (Black 49).

5. Empowers faculty to examine their instructional practices and encourages them to be more responsible for all the stages of the writing process rather than just the final draft (Curran 6;Stern 5).

6. Helps teachers to determine the students' revision abilities. Are students revising or simply recopying the teachers' comments? Are students doing one revision or multiple revisions? (Sommers 156).

7. Enables the teacher to function more as a coach than as a judge, thus decreasing antagonism between the student and the teacher (Clark 515).

8. Helps teachers in writing meaningful comments "that could speak for themselves, not merely serve as accompaniment for a letter grade" (Roemer, Schultz, & Durst 460).

C. BENEFITS OF PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION TO THE WRITING PROGRAM

This instructional approach benefits a writing program in these ways:

1. Encourages developers of writing programs to question traditional teaching practices of "making an assignment and grading the result, then making another assignment and grading that result"(Belanoff 2).

2. Allows for the restructuring of instruction to correspond with the writing program's objectives (Lyons & Condon 186).

3. Helps to bring clarity to instructional goals and methods and to design avenues for consensus building in curriculum (Lyons & Condon 186).

4. Enriches the "process of teaching writing, of developing curriculum and faculty in a writing program, of collecting data about the program's effectiveness" (Lyons & Condon 176).

5. Prompts "communication among faculty," promotes "faculty training and development as a natural outgrowth of the teaching experience," and ". . . promotes consensus and collaboration" (Lyons & Condon 187).

6. Provides the writing program with a more accurate way of evaluating students' writing than the traditional grading system, . . . and reconfigures the organizational structure of a writing program" (Roemer et al. 466).

7. Is a powerful teacher-training and professional development tool " . . . which provides an invaluable opportunity to see students' writing and to share in standard-setting discussions" (Roemer et al. 467).

8. Provides many assessment resources, such as: quality of students' revisions, number of students' revisions, quality of students' prewriting activities, quality of students' thinking, and patterns of errors that students are making (Stern 7).

9. Enhances the writing program's evaluation policy by showing that using multiple samples of writing from each student increases validity and reliability, especially when the same rubric is used (Belanoff 1-9).

10. Provides information for the evaluation of teachers' instruction and the writing program (Aitken 6).

D. CURRICULAR CHANGES PROMPTED BY PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION

To meet the specific needs of "basic" writers, the traditional freshman composition sequence is supplemented with a "developmental" writing sequence. This sequence is especially designed to assist the unprepared student writers to improve the written communication skills that are required for competent college-level work. That is, practitioners believe that a few semesters of "basic" writing courses will provide these unprepared students with the writing skills they need for success in college and beyond. Gray and Slaughter reiterate that position when they assert that " a carefully designed program of several levels nourished and sustained a belief in the students' ability to learn and a willingness to pursue increasingly effective ways to teach them" (15-16).

But who are these "basic" writers? Mina Shaughnessy, a former English teacher who coined the term "basic writer" in 1976, has set the foundation for principles which guide most English teachers' definition of these students. Shaughnessy gives these characteristics of the "basic writer":

> We can infer that they have never written much, in school or out, that they come from families and neighborhoods where people speak other languages or variant, nonprestigious forms of English, and that, while they have doubtless been sensitive to the differences between their ways of speaking and their teachers', they have never been able to sort out or develop attitudes toward the differences that did not put them in conflict, one way or another, with the key academic tasks of learning to read and write and talk in standard English. (139)

E. CRITICISMS OF PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION

Despite the many benefits of portfolio-centered instruction, critics argue about what they perceive to be shortcomings. Some of the most popular criticisms follow:

1. Grades are not eliminated, they are merely delayed (Belanoff 18).

2. The paperload is increased (Belanoff 18; Curran 6-7; Leder 123-26; Sommers 153-64).

3. Some faculty may believe that their authority is compromised when they do not begin grading immediately (Belanoff 18; Curran 6-7; Pelz 149-154).

4. Students' multiple revisions may foster grade inflation (Sommers 157).

5. Multiple revisions may lead to problems about authorship (Belanoff 20).

6. Students may procrastinate and become anxious and hostile over delayed grades (Baker 158; Smit et al. 46-48).

7. Reading of multiple drafts is a time-consuming task (McClelland 165-167).

8. Pressure to adjust to current standards may infuriate faculty (Curran 6-7).

Despite the perceived disadvantages of portfolio-centered instruction, White, a well-known educator, says it best when he advises us to

> . . . maximize the advantages of this method of assessment while minimizing the disadvantages. Those who can perform this balancing act will find that portfolios are the most valuable means available for combining assessment with teaching. (121)

DESCRIPTION OF A PILOT PROGRAM: PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH 020 & 030

PURPOSE OF PILOT PROGRAM

The primary purpose of this pilot program is to design a portfolio-based instructional system that may be easily adapted to and implemented in English 020 and 030. To achieve that aim, the project recommends that portfolio-centered instruction be tailored to encourage our students to understand writing as a continual process and to understand their roles and responsibilities as developing writers. Thus, this program addresses these pertinent factors:

1. *Rationale for a portfolio-based program*
2. *Objectives of the portfolio-based program*
3. *Procedure for implementation of the portfolio-based program*
4. *Conclusion and recommendations*

A. PILOT PROGRAM'S RATIONALE

On February 12, 1996, we received a flyer, "General Education Update," that outlined Chancellor Stephenson's charges to the College-wide Task Force on General Educational Reform. One of her aims addressed "reviewing and analyzing examples of innovative courses, programs, and approaches" in our College. Furthermore, the same flyer identified the need to address in our courses specific written communication skills that are frequently taught in English 020 and 030. The notion of accountability resounded throughout the flyer, encouraging us to assist our students in the acquisition of required literacy skills (McPhail 1-4).

Furthermore, our 1995-96 Campus Goals guideline reverberates the theme of instructional accountability. In the area of developmental studies, for example, our Campus Goals guideline urges that we "develop new and innovative courses[programs, approaches] for students who require developmental education"(*See Appendix B.*)

Although some of us are disheartened by the notions of accountability, we, nevertheless, need to exert positive attitudes toward examining and improving our current instructional practices in our writing courses, for

example. For, perhaps, what is the most troubling of all of our instructional practices is our use of grades to motivate our students rather than to serve as indicators of students' performance. Accordingly, some students often expect us to reward them, with A's, for the time they have spent on a paper, whether the writing is acceptable college-level work or not. When we do not concur, some students become anxious, hostile, and may even stop attending classes, doing multiple revisions, and writing the assigned papers altogether.

How, then, can we serve our "basic" writers without compromising our standards? Research suggests that portfolio-based instruction , while it is not a panacea for all writing problems, encourages "collaborative work between students and teachers as well as among students" (Black 48). That is, it "integrates learning, teaching, and evaluation in practical, theoretical, and productive ways" (Belanoff 1), thus allowing "students and teachers to be allies rather than antagonists" (Black 49).

In short, portfolio-centered instruction seems to be a viable developmental strategy which provides students and teachers with clear evidence of students' progress, teachers' effectiveness, and a writing program's success.

PILOT PROGRAM'S OBJECTIVES

Portfolio-based instruction reaffirms process theories about writing. That is, its overall aim is to pay more "attention to drafting and revision and to the development of self-reflection and self-critical perceptions in the writer"(Roemer, Schultz, & Durst 455). If this student-centered approach to writing claims to be effective, will portfolio-based instruction help students, in English 020 and 030, improve their writing skills and motivate them to remain in the courses? That basic question underlies this pilot program's objectives.

Recent research suggests that when portfolio-centered instruction is used, the result is "a population of students who have all finally passed because they have been given enough time and help to do what we ask of

them"(Elbow & Belanoff 1986b 337). That is, will the classroom condition, the teaching of writing as a process, the requiring of multiple revisions, the using of peer and teacher reviews, the using of formative feedback, and the deferring of continuous evaluation help students improve their writing? Certainly, no one assumes that this portfolio-based approach will completely alter students' perceptions of writing. However, the main objective is to design a teaching-learning system that

- *Reflects campus, divisional, and departmental goals on student's success and retention (See Appendices A & B.)*
- *Encourages students to use consistently the individualized tutorial assistance offered by the Computer Center and the Writing Lab*
- *Enables instructors to incorporate what they know about how their students develop as writers, by emphasizing process, multiple revisions, and collaborative learning*
- *Encourages a genuine academic environment in the classroom, where students succeed, where process is emphasized, and where learning is the goal for student and teacher.*

C. PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF A PORTFOLIO-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Our composition sequence for "basic" or "unprepared" writers has two levels with specific objectives. The first level, *English 020*, "provides comprehensive review and intensive drill in the fundamentals of sentences and paragraphs." The second level, *English 030*, "focuses on fundamental writing problems through extensive work in the construction of sentences, paragraphs, and short essays" (*See Appendix A.*).

Therefore, planning a pilot program that uses portfolio-centered instruction in English 020 and 030 entails careful attention to these questions' responses.

1. *Who are the student and instructor participants in this pilot program?*
2. *How should we structure our instruction to ensure the achievement of the courses' objectives? That is*

a. *Should we use a "typical" syllabus in English 020 and 030?*
b. *What criteria should we use to evaluate the students' work-in-progress and their mid- and end-of-semester portfolios?*
c. *What types of assignments should we include?*
d. *What should students include in their portfolios?*
e. *What types of support services will the students receive?*
f. *What criteria will we use to evaluate students' multiple drafts?*
g. *What constitutes "thoughtful" responses to students' texts?*

1. Student and Instructor Participants:

In this pilot program, that will be conducted in Spring 1997, student participants will be enrollees in one section (each) of English 020 and 030. Both sections will total 40 to 42 students.

At the beginning of the semester, student participants will be informed of the portfolio-based instructional approach that will be used in those sections. Although students will be encouraged to remain in those sections, students may transfer to other sections of English 020 and 030, if they wish.

Any English instructor may use these procedures or modifications of these procedures in his or her portfolio-based instruction in English 020 and 030. However, for the purposes of this pilot program, I have requested one section each of English 020 and 030, during the Spring 1997 semester. I have taught college-level and basic writing courses for approximately 28 years. I have attended and participated in several conferences, seminars, and workshops on portfolio-based instruction. Additionally, I am currently engaged in a major National Council of Teachers of English project on "Creating a Profession: Teaching Writing in the Two-Year College."

2. Structure of Instruction:

a. Syllabus:

Although the "typical" English 020 and 030 syllabi may be used in this portfolio-based system, other supplements that monitor the students' efforts, progress, and achievements should be included.

A. *Evaluation Criteria:*

Delaying or deferring grades until mid-semester or the end of the semester may be viewed by some students as unfair. To minimize their anxieties about grades, these recommendations are suggested:

- Place grades on final drafts of students' texts.
- Place checkmarks on all supplementary exercises, such as editing and revising exercises.
- Give checkmarks to students who actively engage in the in-class peer reviews.
- Give checkmarks to students who consistently seek tutorial assistance from the Writing Center.
- Give checkmarks to students who consistently visit the Computer Center for word-processing during the drafting process.
- Place a "process" grade (*a grade that rewards students' ability to improve from draft to draft*) on the students' mid-semester and end-of-semester portfolios.
- Use varying rubrics to give formative feedback to work-in-progress and final drafts (*See Appendix D*

C. *Types of Assignments:*

The textbooks and courses' objectives will most likely determine the types of assignments given to students in English 020 and 030. Short structured writing assignments (one to four paragraphs) and intensive study of grammar are usually suggested.

- ***The structured assignments*** may be presented on detailed, written assignment sheets that suggest specific steps to follow. These instructions allow students to control their own writing and to consider the many tasks involved in completing an assignment. In the design of the assignments, care should be taken to include a variety of expository, descriptive, and narrative techniques. Different kinds of writing give students a "better chance to demonstrate their proficiency and approximate more accurately the courses' descriptions" (Black 16-17).

Additionally, the variety of assignments supports research findings that suggest that students' "ability to write successfully in one mode does not predict students' ability to write successfully in any other mode"(White & Poulin 3). That is, a variety of writing assignments provide a "venue for each writer's specific strengths and weaknesses"(Stern 4).

- ***The teaching of grammar***, the second focus, should be carefully introduced. Research suggests that out-of-context, prescriptive study of standard English conventions should be avoided. Why is that so? Its findings imply that this type of grammar instruction has no appreciable effect on students' ability to use language well (Memering 553-56). Therefore, it's recommended that grammar instruction should concentrate on teaching students the basics of standard written dialect, conventions which enable them to "write clear sentences, to explore linguistic options, and . . . alternative encoding styles" (Gray & Slaughter 35-36).

Furthermore, "basic" writers need to explore the varying possibilities of sentence structures, which may be achieved through the use of sentence-combining. Originally developed by Melon in the 1960s and modified by O'Hare in the 1970s, sentence-combining helps students gain syntactic maturity without any formal grammar instruction (O'Hare 1-80; Melon 78-89).

Because "basic" writers demonstrate a spectrum of abilities, attention should be paid to their sentence-level skills mastery and production of coherent, sustained short prose pieces (Gray & Slaughter 36).

c. ***Contents of Student Portfolios:***

If a "portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in a course" (Damico 2), then students' portfolios should represent their growth in writing up to mid-semester and at the end of the semester. Working collaboratively, students and instructors may decide on the portfolio's contents. That is, students may elect to include certain papers. At the same time, instructors may require the inclusion of certain assignments and format for the portfolios. This procedure

allows students to "become better evaluators of their writing" and encourages them "to be committed more to revision" (Belanoff 5). It also "promotes students' ownership of the portfolio" (White 21). [*Appendix C contains suggested guidelines that students may follow in the construction and submission of their portfolios at mid semester and at the end of the semester.*]

Generally, portfolios contain multiple samples of papers written over a period of time. This requirement ensures fairness of assessment because multiple samples provide an effective way of measuring writing ability. White supports this procedure when he states: "If we use only one kind of topic, we will be disadvantaging those students who perform better in another mode and favoring those who do best in the one mode we assigned" (White,*1989* 108). Additionally, the number of pieces and lengths should be stipulated to encourage students to view the portfolios as worthwhile accomplishments (Black 16). Finally, multiple revisions should become the focus of the students' papers.

e. ***Student Support Services:***

Traditional forms of contact between students and teacher are lectures, class discussions, and written comments on paper. However, portfolio-based instruction requires student-centered reinforcements that rely on collaboration as a learning-teaching tool. Furthermore, this approach promotes interaction between reader and writer, promotes dialogue and negotiation, and heightens the writer's sense of audience (Harris 370-71). Some of these collaborative efforts are one-on-one or small-group tutorials, student-teacher conferences, peer reviews, and computer-assisted strategies. The instructor should determine the types and frequency of use of these teaching-learning aids.

- ***Peer reviews***, for example, offer several benefits:
  - a. *Include the experience of writing and revising for less threatening audiences than the teacher (Burkland & Grim 23"-46).*
  - b. *Help in learning to discriminate between useful and non-useful feedback (Kiere & Abbott 3621-85).*

c. *Aid in learning to use awareness of anticipated audience responses as writers revise (Berkenkotter 312-13).*
d. *Offer each other needed emotional support (Liebhardt 69-74).*
e. *Reduce paper grading and students' apprehension about grades (Brannon & Knoblauch 157-66).*
f. *Expose students to a variety of writing styles and motivate them to revise (Bridwell 197-222).*
g. *Help students develop a better sense of audience and a sense of community (Gere & Abbott 362-85).*
h. *Offer each other feedback which contributes to the evolution of ideas, thus shaping and testing thought (Spear 1-8).*
i. *Help students to become responsible for editing, proofreading, and correcting peers' texts and their own (Harris 370).*

- ***Student-teacher conferences***, for example,
  a. *Help the teacher to monitor students' confusions and difficulties(Elsasser & Slaughter 71).*
  b. *Help the teacher to provide one-on-one tutorial assistance to the student (Elsasser & Slaughter 71).*
  c. *Encourage students to confer with the instructor who will assist them with problems they are encountering in writing (Elsasser & Slaughter 72).*
  d. *Help to break down communication barriers which may have been evidenced in the classroom (Harris 371).*
  e. *Reinforce the role of the teacher as facilitator, coach, guide.*

- ***Writing Center Tutorials***, *for example,*
  a. *Provide reader responses to writer's texts, thus leading the students toward finding their own answers.*
  b. *Suggest strategies to try by listening while students articulate their message.*
  c. *Diagnose possible underlying problems in the students' writing.*
  d. *Offer needed support during the "composing struggle" (Harris 376).*
  e. *Provide the student with one-on-one tutorial support as the student goes through the drafting process.*

• ***Computer-assisted instruction*** *offers several benefits. Research studies show that computers should be used "to support instructional activities by providing ways for students to generate ideas and improve their understanding of the writing process, as well as to revise and edit their work" (Posey 234). Furthermore, students should be encouraged to work one of two or three class periods a week in the Computer Center. If this recommendation is followed, rapid gains in writing improvement will result. When " computer technology is combined with sound instruction, students' writing will improve" (Posey 234).*

f. ***Evaluation of Students' Multiple Drafts/Revisions:***

Traditionally, revision for the "unprepared" writer means copy editing, a "tidying up activity aimed at eliminating surface errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and diction" (Faigley & Witte 400). Also, other researchers suggest that "inexperienced" writers focus primarily on lower-level concerns, such as word choice, rather than on broader concerns, such as content, when revising their papers (Bridwell 197-222; Sommers 148-56; Yagelski 216). Bridwell and Sommers, for example, found that approximately 80% of the total revisions made by "basic" writers were "surface level, word-level, phrase level, or clause level changes"(qtd. in Yagelski 216). Thus, keeping in mind that a revision scheme may contain surface stylistic, structural, and content changes, we need to assist "basic" writers through the entire drafting process. Our concern should not be only with the final product.

But, how do we assist our students with their revisions? How many revisions should a student submit? To assist students with their revisions in a meaningful way, we need to have different expectations for each type of draft that the student produces. As students produce drafts, they should be encouraged to seek tutorial assistance from the Writing Center, peer response groups, and the instructor. They should also be encouraged to use the Computer Center for word-processing at the different drafting levels of their papers.

Basically, there are three types of drafts: ***"zero" drafts, "discovery " drafts, and "presentational" or "final" drafts.***

1. ***A "Zero" draft***
   - is "the prose that emerges from the students' rough notes" (White 122).
   - represents "the writer's attempt to bridge the gap between an initial conceptualization of the topic and the organization of the written text" (Huff 82).
   - varies "in its completeness from writer to writer . . . and from task to task. . . . It contains invention strategies, such as outlining, listing of details, mapping, freewriting" (Huff 83-85).
   - exemplifies the "moment of revelation of excitement and discouragement. . . . [The writer] plays with a word and it leads to a phrase which in turn can lead to a revelation about the subject. . . . At this moment of composition all that [the writer] knows and doesn't know is there on the page" (Murray 9).

Evaluation of "zero" drafts may take several forms: one-on-one conference with the instructor and/or Writing Center tutor, peer critique, and written comments on a separate response sheet (*See Appendix D*). Thus, a "zero" draft desperately needs revision. Therefore, students, when working on "zero" drafts, should be encouraged to identify problems by deleting them from the rest of the text, especially those details that do not logically support the development of their text. At this level, we are really not concerned with major rhetorical problems, but with the students' ability to pinpoint areas that do not determine what precedes and succeeds the ideas they are trying to formulate as they develop their texts (*See Feedback Forms in Appendix*).

2. ***A "discovery" draft***
   - is the next level in revision which usually "requires organization, focus, and development" of the text (White 122).
   - collapses " a set of extraordinarily complicated relationships into a list of generalizations. . . . Supporting generalizations through the addition of specific details and examples . . . is an important function" (Huff 89).

- Gives the writer the "freedom to cut and paste, to reorder the basic organizational structure of the text, and to insert new text to fill the gaps" (Huff 93).

In short, during the "discovery" draft stage, writers are faced with global concerns of organization, focus, and development. To improve their texts, students need to rework the overall structure of the paper by adding, deleting, substituting, and reordering details to reflect a coherent, logical text. Thus, at the "discovery" draft level, students may be encouraged to participate in in-class peer reviews of the "discovery" drafts, using a more specific checklist (*See suggested Feedback Forms in Appendix D*). Also, if time permits, the instructor may review the students' "discovery" draft, offering more feedback that will enable the students to improve their *drafts*. Furthermore, the students may wish to seek tutorial assistance from the Writing Center, at this specific stage.

3. ***A "presentational" or "final" draft***

- revises the "discovery draft . . . and reflects careful editing and a high degree of polish" (White 122).
- tends to "consist of correcting mechanics and usage, deleting redundancy or wordiness, and making additions or substitutions in word choice. . . . It also tends to be characterized by the addition or deletion of an occasional sequence or two or three sentences; major substitutions or reordering seldom occur" (Huff 93).
  (See suggested Feedback Forms in Appendix D.)

In short, as students revise their drafts -- the number of revisions at each level is dependent on the writer's level of rhetorical and grammatical skills' mastery-- we should encourage the writers to develop a positive attitude writing. Faigley and Witte, professors and researchers of composition, enunciate this point when they say that "successful revision results not from the number of changes a writer makes, but from the degree to which revision changes bring a text closer to fitting the demands of the [writing] situation" (411).

g. *Thoughtful Responses to Students' Texts:*

Research shows that "basic" writers tend to revise locally, ignoring situational writing constraints, such as focus, format, task, audience, level of stylistic formality, and length of task (Sommers 148). Thus, we should try to give thoughtful, facilitative responses to all students' texts at all levels of the drafting process.

What, then, constitutes "thoughtful" responses? Specifically, *what effects do comments have on helping students become more effective writers?* Before responding to these questions, let's review what the research states about the traditional approaches we use to respond to students' texts.

- ***Appropriation of Students' Texts:***

Some of our comments appropriate students' texts because we tend to want to control students' writing; thus, students lose control of their own texts. The students make the changes we want rather than those the students perceive as necessary, since our concerns imposed on the text create the reasons for the subsequent changes. For example, we appropriate the students' texts when attention is paid only to "accidents of discourse" (Sommers 150), such as sentence-level problems in "zero" drafts. The implication is that sentence-level problems need to be attended to before textual problems, such as development, organization, and structure.

Furthermore, marginal and interlinear comments on sentence-level problems in "zero" drafts confuse students. First, we have shown the students how to edit the sentences, thus encouraging the students to see the "zero" draft as a fixed piece that needs some editing. Second, we command the students to edit and revise at the same time in "zero" drafting.

Additionally, when we appropriate the students' texts, students see their writing as a series of parts: words, sentences, and paragraphs, not as a whole discourse. Thus, the sentence-level comments at "zero" drafting encourage students to believe that this stage represents finished drafts and that all they need to do is to patch and polish their writing. Often when students do revision, "discovery" drafts are sometimes inferior to the "zero"

draft because the students merely follow every comment and fix their texts appropriately as we requested.

Normally, no written comments should be placed on "zero" drafts. The comments should be on a separate response sheet because the teachers' goal is to guide the student in discovering relations between and among the drafts(*See suggested Feedback Forms in Appendix D*).

- ***Instructors' Vague Responses to Students' Texts:***

Second, research suggests that most teachers' comments are "not text-specific and could be interchanged, rubber-stamped, from text to text" (Sommers 152). That is, the comments are non-specific, generic, a form code of commands, requests, and pleadings that demonstrates vagueness, while the student is commanded to be specific. Some examples of "vague" comments follow:

- ***"Choose precise language."***
- ***"Think about your audience."***
- ***"Be specific."***
- ***"Elaborate."***
- ***"Why?"***
- ***"Be clear."***

Those examples do not show students what specific questions the reader has about the meaning of the text, nor is the writer shown how to be specific (Sommers 149-153). Again, these comments suggest that the "zero" and "discovery" drafts are finished products that were not going to be revised. That is, the research suggests that we do not respond to students' texts with the kind of thoughtful commentary that will help students to engage with "the issues they are writing about or which will help them think about their purposes and goals in writing a specific text " (Sommers 154).

How should we make comments that respect the differences between our responsibility and students' responsibility to emerging texts? What kinds of recommendations does the research on revision offer to use to help us make "thoughtful" responses to students' texts? Some suggestions include:

- Thoughtful comments *should* "create the motive for revising"(Sommers 149). Our goal in commenting on early drafts should be to engage students with the issues they are considering and help them clarify their purposes and reasons in writing their specific texts.

- Thoughtful comments "serve as a sounding board enabling the writer to see confusions in the text and encouraging the writer to explore alternatives that he or she may not have considered" (Greenhalgh 401). The recommendation seems to suggest that we should relinquish our traditional roles as evaluators, as gatekeepers, as editors, as proofreaders of students' writing (Brannon & Knoblauch 161).

- Thoughtful comments "endorse the role of teachers as 'sounding boards.'"(Sommers 156). Thus, we need to "show [our students] through our comments why new choices would positively change their texts, and thus to show them the potential for development implicit in their own writing"(Sommers 156). We hope that our comments engage students and motivate them to take control of their own writing.

In sum, *what are the current ways of responding to students' texts? Which way is the more appropriate?* Research implies two ways *directive and facilitative* (Anson 269-351; Danis 16-19; Sommers 156; Straub 226-233).

First of all, ***directive comments*** have these features: They

- are authoritative.
- are highly critical.
- tell what is not working in the paper.
- use comments framed as corrections.
- use imperatives that tell the student what to do by way of revision.
- use short staccato-like comments (e.g.: "All people!" "Do we?")
- assume the role of writer and critic of students' texts.
- assert authority over the students' text.
- make editorial changes.

- give little attention to content and organization.
- impose an idealized text on the student, his or her own model of what counts in a piece of writing and how the writing ought to appear.
- focus on surface features of the students' text and write comments that are teacher-based and egocentric.
- freely mark up the students' text by circling errors, underlining problem areas, and inserting corrections on the students' texts.

Second, ***facilitative comments*** have these features. They

- focus on conceptual matters, such as content, development, and organization.
- use full statements.
- work with students' ideas and offer helpful comments.
- use a conversational mode of responding.
- write text-specific comments.
- assume the role of coach, a collaborator, a facilitator with some expertise and who recognizes the student as primary creator of the text.
- use reflective statements that provide "options for revision but are never put dictatorially or appropriatively" (Anson 351).

Thus, as teachers of writing, we need to

- develop our own responding practices and shape our comments to fit our teaching styles, students' learning styles, and course's goals.
- allow our students to develop their own ideas and to take responsibility for their own texts.
- permit our students to make their own decisions and learn to make better choices that will positively influence their texts.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this pilot program hopes to demonstrate that portfolio-centered instruction is a viable alternative to traditional instructional approaches in "basic" writing courses. Besides, portfolio-based instruction is

a natural extension of our current emphasis on process, reflecting that writing can always be made better and that writers can always improve. Furthermore, this approach is consistent with current theories about how people write.

Because this pilot program is experimental and restricted to English 020 and 030, inferences will be applicable only to the students in the two sections of these courses. Therefore, students will be encouraged to evaluate their experiences in these courses, using the suggested form in Appendix G. From this feedback, changes will be made to accommodate more efficiently the diverse needs of our "basic" writers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To determine the effectiveness of a portfolio-based instructional program, these recommendations are made:

- *Design a longitudinal study that keeps track of this cohort,* students in this pilot program, *for a period of two years.*

  The primary aims are to determine
  - *their level of success in other courses that require writing*
  - *their retention rates in those courses that require writing.*

- *Design a comparative study that compares two types of instruction: portfolio-based instruction and standard process instruction in two sections of English 020 and Or English 030. The primary aim of this study is to determine the effectiveness of both types of instruction, especially regarding "basic" writers' attitude toward writing and "basic" writers' level of writing improvement.*

APPENDIX A:
Forest Park's English 020 and 030 Departmental Aims/Outline

REVISED COURSE ENTRANCE CRITERIA AND EXIT COMPETENCIES FOR THE SEQUENCE OF COMPOSITION COURSES AT FOREST PARK

ENGLISH 020--DEVELOPMENTAL ENGLISH

Course Description: This course provides comprehensive review and intensive drill in the fundamentals of English sentences and paragraphs. Near the end of the semester, students will be counseled concerning their progress and additional work they may need to accomplish their particular writing goals. Recommendation of the department and previous or concurrent enrollment in a developmental reading course is required.

Entrance criteria

On the college placement test, a student must meet the minimum entrance criteria below:

1. Student addresses the prompt appropriately--i.e., responds to the assigned topic.
2. Student's writing is intelligible, though problems with word formation, grammatical construction, and English syntax may appear.
3. Students' reading placement is usually 5.0.

Student Exit Competencies

1. Student must be able to write a minimum of 150 words on a topic in 50 minutes.
2. Student must be able to write a basic paragraph.
3. Student must be able to write about selected readings.
4. Student must be able to revise and edit his/her work effectively.
5. Student must be able to write clear sentences--that is, with few mechanical or grammatical errors that interfere with meaning.

Instructor Course Aims

1. Students should understand that there are many dialects of English, each appropriately used in different cultural, professional, and academic contexts.
2. Students should understand that the use of different dialects gives them access to and membership in different discourse communities.
3. Students should understand that writing is produced through a process of prewriting, writing, and rewriting.
4. Students should gain greater confidence in their writing skills and the competence to continue writing in other college courses.
5. Students should be able to use college resources beyond the ENG:020 teacher (such the Writing Center) to aid their study of writing.
6. Students should understand the applicability of skills learned in Introduction to College Composition 020 to the workplace as well as to academia.

ENG:030--INTRODUCTION TO COLLEGE WRITING

Course Description: This course is designed primarily to help prepare students for successful work in College Composition I, though it may benefit anyone desiring to improve basic grammar and writing skills. The course focuses on fundamental writing problems through extensive work in the construction of sentences, paragraphs, and short essays. Previous or concurrent enrollment in a developmental reading course is encouraged. Near the end of the semester, students will be counseled concerning their progress and what additional work they may need to accomplish their particular writing goals.

Entrance criteria

To be placed in or promoted to ENG:030, a student must demonstrate the competencies required to exit ENG:020.

1. Student must be able to write 150 words in 50 minutes
2. Student must be able to write a basic paragraph.
3. Student must be able to write clear sentences--that is, with few mechanical or grammatical errors that interfere with meaning.

Student Exit Competencies

1. Student must be able to write 300 words in 50 minutes.
2. Student must regularly and consistently be able to write clear, complete sentences--with few errors in mechanics or edited American English.
3. Student must be able to write sentences in a variety of sentence patterns.
4. Student must be able to write unified, coherent paragraphs using several rhetorical modes.
5. Student must be able to write a basic essay including an introduction with thesis, body, and conclusion.
6. Student must be able to revise and edit his/her own writing.

Instructor Course Aims

1. Students should understand that there are many dialects of English, each appropriately used in different cultural, professional, and academic contexts.
2. Students should understand that the use of different dialects gives them access to and membership in different discourse communities.
3. Students should understand that writing is produced through a process of prewriting, writing, and rewriting.
4. Students should gain greater confidence in their writing skills and the competence to continue writing in other college courses.
5. Students should be able to use college resources other than the ENG:030 instructor (such as the Writing Center and the English Computer Center) to aid their study of writing.
6. Students should understand the applicability of skills learned in Introduction to College Composition 030 to the workplace as well as to academia.

APPENDIX B:
Forest Park's 1995-96 Developmental Studies Goals for Improving Student Success

GOAL III.

Improve student success through developmental studies

Establish an office of Developmental Education including the appointment of a coordinator and stating how the office will fit in the organization.

Appoint a committee to assist the Developmental Education Coordinator in the development of a program model. A pilot program will be initiated.

Develop a nexus between developmental education and existing programs by pairing and/or linking selective disciplines in innovative ways.

Research successful developmental studies programs at other community colleges and propose adaptations from those programs for implementation at the Forest Park campus.

Develop new and innovative courses for students who require developmental education.

Once the model for implementation has been decided, pursue grant funds for implementation.

APPENDIX C:
DESCRIPTION OF PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

(Adaptations from several handouts from various seminars, workshops, and conferences)

GUIDELINES:
DESCRIPTION OF PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

A. Overview Directions:

The end-of-semester portfolios, neatly packaged in a three-ring binder, should contain a variety of student-selected completed papers with these details:

1. *Table of Contents*
2. *Cover Sheet*
3. *Assignment Sheet*
4. *Multiple Drafts*
5. *Multiple Feedback Forms.*

B. Contents of Each Assignment:

Select 3 assignments which show writing done at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester. These assignments, arranged chronologically, should include:

1. *A Completed Cover Sheet*
2. *Multiple Drafts*
3. *Completed Feedback Forms (from peers, tutors, instructor)*
4. *Writing Portfolio Score Sheet*
5. *Assignment Sheet*

C. Types of Assignments:

Choose at least 3 papers (1 to 4 paragraphs) that show your ability to use the following as major modes of development in your texts:

1. *Example*
2. *Narration*
3. *description*
4. *Process Analysis*

D. Manuscript Format:

All final drafts should

1. *be typed.*
2. *be double-spaced.*
3. *include a title.*
4. *be structured with a clear beginning, middle, and end.*
5. *be arranged chronologically (according to when the paper was written).*
6. *have appropriate lengths:*
   a. *Paragraphs: 120-200 words*
   b. *Essays: 500-800 words*
7. *be submitted on the due date: **the 14th week of the semester.***

TABLE OF CONTENTS
STUDENT RECORD OF PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

Extra lines are provided beyond the number of papers you are required to submit. These lines are for students who elect to submit more papers than required.

	TITLE OF PAPER	**Date of Submission**
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____

_____

Final Score: _____

Instructor's Comments:

COVER PAGE FOR WRITING PORTFOLIOS
[Complete and attach this cover sheet
to each assignment package.]

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructor's Name: _____

Course & Section: _____

1. Summarize the assignment requirements for the attached paper.

2. What do you see as your writing strengths in this paper?

3. What do you see as writing areas in need of improvement based upon this paper?

4. Indicate any individuals who assisted you with this paper.

WRITING PORTFOLIO SCORE SHEET

STUDENT' NAME:_____

SCORING SCALE:

Writing portfolios are scored as one holistic unit. A scale of 5 to 1 is used. A score of 3 or higher is needed to receive a C or better. The score scale is as follows:

5 = excellent
4 = good
3 = satisfactory
2 = unsatisfactory
1 = unacceptable
Inc. = Incomplete (work is missing)

SCORE

CRITERIA LIST:

A plus mark in front of an area indicates a strength; a check mark indicates an area is satisfactory; a minus mark indicates an area in need of improvement.

_____ **1. Fluidity and clarity of expression**
_____ **2.Use of appropriate organizational structure**
_____ **3.Sufficient use of details and elaboration**
_____ **4.Critical thinking skills**
_____ **5.Effective use of language and diction**
_____ **6.Correct mechanics and usage**

COMMENTS:

PORTFOLIO EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following explanations will guide the instructor in the evaluation of the mid-semester and end-of-semester portfolios. They are offered here to help students understand the criterion checklist.

1. FLUIDITY AND CLARITY OF EXPRESSION: The writer expresses his or her ideas in a style that allows a smooth reading and clear communication.

- *Ideas are written so that they can easily be understood.*
- *Sentence structure permits a smooth reading.*
- *If the reader has to struggle to understand what the student writer is saying, then this criterion item may be the reason.*

2.ORGANIZATION : The paper has a clear beginning, middle, and end. Additionally, the ideas, within the paragraphs, are arranged logically.

- *A thesis topic sentence should state the parts of the paper, and the paper should follow the stated plan.*
- *Transitions should link parts of the paper, and topic sentences, should connect material in parts of the paper to the given plan.*
- *Paragraphs (whether the assignment is a one-paragraph or an essay) should be unified and coherent.*

3. DEVELOPMENT/ELABORATION AND DETAILS: The writer needs to develop ideas fully and to provide adequate supporting details.

- *Each main point of the paper should be adequately developed. Paragraphs should advance ideas rather than repeat ideas.*
- *Uses of sufficient details, such as examples and descriptive details, are essential to the development of main ideas.*
- *Most papers require a mix of elaboration (explanation) and supporting detail (evidence). The appropriate balance should reflect the assignment requirements.*
- *Some writers will offer sufficient detail but give little attention to elaboration, and some will offer elaborations with little detail. Papers with detail and little elaboration tend to read like lists. Papers with*

elaboration but insufficient detail tend to read like one generalization after another.

4. **CRITICAL THINKING:** The writer needs to demonstrate the abilities of analysis and critique.

- *A writer who offers only descriptions or strings together ideas shows little ability to analyze and critique ideas.*
- *The writer needs to support ideas in an appropriate way and to connect* supporting ideas to a point that is being made.
- *The writer needs to do more than state facts.*

5. **EFFECTIVE USE OF LANGUAGE AND DICTION:** The writer should use vocabulary that is suitable to the requirements of English 020 and 030.

- Simplistic vocabulary, too many colloquialisms, or a lack of variety in word choices are signs of a struggle to use language effectively.
- Consistently incorrect word choices are other indicators of difficulty with language and diction.

6. **MECHANICS AND USAGE:** This area entails two skills:

- *Mechanics include spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and correct paragraph indentation. Errors in mechanics are sometimes linked to proofreading and editing.*
- *Usage includes verb tense, subject-verb-agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, correct formation of possessive nouns, correct sentence boundaries (avoidance of fragments, comma splices, and run-ons), and correct modification (avoidance of misplaced or dangling modifiers)-- to name some of the most troublesome areas.*
- *An abundance of errors in mechanics and usage that prevents a smooth reading of the paper merits a minus in this criterion area. Occasional errors that do not interfere with the reading of the paper may be considered acceptable. A check would be appropriate if occasional errors occur; if errors are nonexistent or virtually nonexistent, a plus is merited.*

APPENDIX D:
FEEDBACK GUIDES

FEEDBACK ON ZERO DRAFT

Student's Name: _____

Date: _____

Reviewer: _____

Course & Section: _____

Assessment	Quantity	Process	Effectiveness
Excellent	Ample	Produces & organizes ideas	Selects appropriate details
Acceptable	Sufficient	Produces ideas	Selects ideas that provide some direction
Unacceptable	Minimal or None	Does nothing or is careless	Does not connect prewriting to the assignment

(Adaptation from Bloom's Community of Classroom 100.)

EDITING SHEET ***ENGLISH*** ***DATE:_____***

WRITER'S NAME:_____
EDITOR'S NAME:_____

Directions: Answer each question carefully and exactly.

1. State the essay's thesis. Use the writer's exact words if you can. If the thesis with the essay map is not clearly stated in the essay, restate it more clearly in your own words.

2. Explain how the writer develops this thesis statement by describing the essay paragraph by paragraph. Paraphrase each paragraph in one sentence, stating specifically what the paragraph says. Then explain how each paragraph is related to the thesis statement and to the immediately preceding paragraph or paragraphs.

3. What are the essay's strengths? What do you like about it? What do you think is well done?

4. What should the writer do to improve the essay?

SAMPLE EDITING SHEET

Answer each question carefully and exactly. Do unto other writers as you would have them do unto you.

1. State the essay's main point. Use the writer's words if you can. If the main point is not clearly stated in the essay, restate it more clearly in your own words.

2. Explain how the writer develops this main point by describing the essay paragraph by paragraph. Paraphrase each paragraph in one sentence, stating succinctly what the paragraph says. Then explain how each paragraph is related to the main point of the paper and to the immediately preceding paragraph or paragraphs.

3. What are the essay's strengths? What do you like about it? What do you think is well done?

NOTE: Writers need to know what they are doing right in order to keep doing it. So this question is not just a place to be comforting and supportive. Tell writers what is *good* about their work, and don't be afraid to be obvious.

4. What should the writer do to improve the essay?

NOTE: Question 4 is not a place to tell writers everything that is *bad* about their work. It is a place to tell writers what you (a thoughtful reader) think they could be doing better in order to make your job of reading easier. Set some priorities if you can. Some problems are more damaging than others.

In all your writing as a reader of the work of others, pay careful attention to how you say what you have to say. Always explain any generalizations you make, give examples, and try to be helpful and practical.

D-4

EVALUATION FORM **ENGLISH**

NAME:_____

POINTS/grade:_____ **PAPER #:**_____

GRADING CRITERIA

1. **CONTENT OF PAPER** _____

2. **ORGANIZATION OF PAPER** _____

3. **EXPRESSION** _____

4. **MECHANICS/USAGE** _____

TOTAL_____

INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENTS/recommendations:

N.B.: If you receive an R, please thoroughly revise and edit paper. Resubmit the revision along with the original within two class periods. You may also seek assistance from the Writing Center (A-238).

SCORING GUIDE
Assessing Body Paragraphs
Developmental Writing

Place an X in the appropriate box

	SUPERIOR	ACCEPTABLE	NOT ACCEPTABLE
FOCUS	The writing presents a clear focus.	Readers (peers) may have minor difficulty understanding the author's point.	The focus is confusing or missing.
COHERENCE/ UNITY	The information is presented in a logical manner and develops the focus.	The writing occasionally seems disconnected or the information lacks relevance.	Readers are lost.
SUPPORT	Ample details create a picture, inform or persuade. Readers want to keep reading.	The details generally support the focus but are not as well-chosen or as well-developed as in a superior paragraph.	The details lack relevance or depth.
CORRECTNESS	The writing adheres to Academic English with only minor distractions.	The writing includes a few errors, but they do not significantly alter the paper's effectiveness.	Frequent errors distract readers and obscure meaning.
AUDIENCE	Because the focus is exemplary and the vocabulary and details are chosen with care, the reader is moved emotionally or benefits intellectually.	The writing generally succeeds in meeting the needs of its audience.	The writing, while it may be correct and complete, offers little information to the targeted audience.

(Bloom 103+)

APPENDIX E: BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anson, C. Writing and Response. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1998.

Aitken, Joan E. Empowering Students and Faculty Through Portfolio Assessment. ERIC Document. No. ED. 355-599 (1994).

Baker, Nancy. "The Effect of Portfolio-Based Instruction on Composition Students' Final Examination Scores, Course Grades, and Attitudes Toward Writing." Research in the Teaching of Writing. 27.2 (1993): 155-174.

Belanoff, Pat. Portfolios. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994.

Belanoff, Pat and A.B. Robertson. Stony Brook Writing Program Handbook. New York: SUNY Press,1993.

Berkenkotter, Carol. "Student Writers and Their Sense of Authority over Text." CCC 35 (1984): 312-319.

Black, Laurel. Handbook of Writing Portfolio Assessment: A Program for College Placement. ERIC Document. No. ED 350-617. (1994).

Bloom, Tom. (Ed.) Community of Classrooms: A Handbook for Preparing Students for Reading and Writing in College. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Community College District, 1994.

Brannon, Lil & C.H. Knoblauch. "On Students Rights to Thewir Own Texts: A Model of Teacher Response." CCC 33.2 (1982):157-166.

Bridwell, L. S. "Revising Strategies in Twelfth Grade Students' Transactional Writing." Research in the Teaching of English. 14 (1980):197-222.

Burkland, Jill & Nancy Grim. "Motivating through Responding." Journal of Teaching Writing. 5.2 (1986): 237-46.

Clark, Irene L. "Portfolio Evaluation, Collaboration, and Writing Centers." CCC 42.2 (1993):515-524.

Curran, P. "The Portfolio Approach to Assessing Student Writing: In Interim Report." Composition Chronicle, (1989):6-7.

Damico, Natalie. "Portfolio Reflections." Paper delivered at CCCC/NCTE Conference, March 1995.

Danis, Francine M. "The Voice in the Margins: Paper Marking as Conversation." Freshman English News, 15.3 (1987):18-20.

Elbow, P. and Pat Belanoff. "State University of New York, Stony Brook." In P. Connolly & T. Vilardi (Eds.), New Methods in College Writing Programs: Theories in Practice. New York: MLA, 1986a:95-805.

Elbow, P. and Pat Belanoff. "Portfolios, a Substitute for Proficiency Examinations." CCC,37.3 (1986b):363-339.

Faigley, Lester & Stephen Witte. "Analyzing Revision."CCC 32.4 (1981): 400-414.

Gebhardt, Richard. "Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing." College English, 42 (1980):69-74.

Gere, Ann R. & Robert Abbott. "Talking about Writing: The Language of Writing Groups." Research in the Teaching of English, 19 (1985): 362-85.

Gray, Barbara & Virginia Slaughter "Writing." In Alice Trillin (Ed.) Teaching Basic Skills in College. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 1980: 12-90.

Greenhalgh, Anne M. "Voices in Response: A Postmodern Reading of Teacher Response." CCC 43.2 (1992): 401-410.

Harris, Muriel. "Collaboration Is Not Collaboration Is Not Collaboration: Writing Center Tutorials vs. Peer Response Groups." CCC 43.3 (1992): 369-383.

Harrison, Susan. "Valuing Writing: Students and Their Portfolios." ERIC Document. No. ED 334 574 (1991).

Hewitt, G. "An Introduction to Portfolio-based Writing Assessment." Paper delivered at NCTE conference, November 1993.

Hileman, S. & B. Case. "A Basic Writer's Portfolio." In Pat Belanoff and M. Dickson (Eds.) Portfolios: Process and Product. Portsmouth, NH: 1991174-81.

Huff, Ronald. "Teaching Revision: A Model of the Drafting Process." In Emily Seebinder & Susan Landstrom (Eds.) The Holt Handbook: Instructor's Manual. 2nd. edition. Chicago: Holt 1990. 82-99.

Leder, J. "An Echo of Genesis: An Assessment of ther Business Writing Portfolio." In Pat Belanoff and M. Dickson (Eds.). Portfolios: Process and Product 123-136. Portsmouth,NH: Boynton Cook Press,1991.

Lyons, Liz & William Condon. "Questioning Assumptions about Portfolio-based Assesement." CCC, 44.2 (1993): 176-190.

McClelland, K. "Portfolios: A Solution to a Problem." In Pat Belanoff & M. Dickson (Eds.). Portfolios: Process and Product. 165-173. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton Press, 1991.

McPhail, Irving P. "General Education Update." No. 300035 38. St. Louis Community College, February 1996.

Melon, J. C. Transformational Sentence-Combining: A Method for Enhancing the Development of Syntactic Fluency in English Composition. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1969.

Memering, D. "Forward to the Basics." College English. 39.5 (1978): 553-561.

Murphy, S. & M. A. Smith. "Talking about Portfolios." The Quarterly. 12.2 (1990): 1-3+

Murray, Donald. A Teacher Teaches Writing. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1968.

O'Hare, F. Sentence-combining: Improving Student Writing without Formal Grammar Instruction. Urbana, IL:NCTE, 1972.

Pelz, K. "Western Kentucky University: The Pilot Project." In P. Connolly & T. Vilardi (Eds.) New Methods in College Writing Programs: Theories in Practice. 149-154. New York: MLA, 1986.

Posey, Evelyn J. "The Widening Gulf: Computer-enhanced Instruction in the Developmental Writing Classroom." Teaching English in the Two-Year College. 21.3 (1994): 233-237.

Roemer, Marjorie, Lucille M. Schultz, & Russel K. Durst. "Portfolios and the Process of Change." CCC 42 (1991): 455-69.

Shaughnessy, Mina. Basic Writing." In G. Tate (Ed.), Teaching Composition: Ten Bibliographic Essays. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976: 137-467.

Smit, D., P. Kolonsky, & K. Seltzer. "Implementing a Portfolio System at Kansas University." In P. Belanoff & M. Dickson (Eds.), Portfolios: Process and Product. 45-56. Portsmouth, NH: Boyton Cook, 1991.

Sommers, Nancy. "responding to Student Writing." CCC. 33.2 (1982): 148-56.

Sommers, Nancy. "Bringing Practice in Line with Theory: Using Portfolio Grading in the Composition Classroom." In Pat Belanoff & M. Dickson (Eds.), Portfolios: Process and Product. 153-164. Portsmouth, NH: Boyton Cook, 1991.

Spear, Karen. Sharing Writing: Peer Response Groups in English Classes. Portsmouth, NH: Boyton Cook, 1988.

Stern, Caroline. Student Writers Practicing Self-Assessment. ERIC Document. No. ED 354 509. (1993).

Straub, Richard. "The Concept of Control in Teacher Response: Defining the Varieties of 'Directive' and 'Facilitative' Commentary." CCC, 47.2 (1996): 223-251.

Wauters, Joan K. Uni ng Two-Year and Four-Year College Programs through Portfolio Assessment. ERIC Document. No. ED 349 551 (1993).

White, Edward M. Teaching and Assessing Writing. 2nd. edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994.

White, Edward M. & Linda Poulin. Research in Effective Teaching of Writing. Vols. I & II. ERIC Document. No. ED 275 007. (1986).

White , Edward M. Developing Successful College Writing Programs. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989.

Yagelski, Robert P. "The Role of Classroom Context in the Revision Strategies of Student Writers." Research in the Teaching of English. 29.2 (1995):216-238.

APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY

[Handout from Hewett, "An Introduction to Petrophysics ....."]

Geof Hewitt
Vt. Dept. of Education
120 State St.
Montpelier, VT 05620
(802) 828-3111

"An Introduction to Portfolio-based Writing Assessment,"
NCTE, November 19, 1993

Glossary

Portfolio. A collection of work. The first known portfolios have been found on the walls of the homes of the cave people. Graphic artists often use portfolios as a way of showing their best work to potential clients. For the purposes of this workshop, we will consider *writing portfolios* only, and will distinguish the writing portfolio from a writing folder: a writing folder contains work in progress and pieces of writing the author does not consider representative of his/her best efforts. A portfolio is a selection of work in which the writer takes pride; a portfolio is the result of considerable reflection or self-assessment.

Assess/assessment. Regrettably, "assessment" is frequently used as a euphemism for "test." It is important to remember that the Latin root of "assess" means "to sit beside." Although some asressments may result from a series of tests, most people do not produce their best writing under test-like conditions. For this reason, portfolio assessment has become an important way of measuring the development of young writers. Note that "portfolio assessment" is two words: large-scale assessment systems based on students' portfolios are still in the experimental stage. If the experiment fails, portfolios will remain as a centuries-old, proven tool for helping students witness and reflect upon their progress.

Performance-based assessment. Performance-based assessment is a form of active observations by teacher and student. It is not a single letter grade applied at the end of each marking period. Rather, it is an ongoing conversation (between teacher and student, among students, between teacher and him/herself, and between student and him/herself) where mutually-accepted standards of performance are addressed. Student work is not compared with other student work, but evaluated against the established standards. Not all standards of performance need be addressed in any single task. In performance-based assessment, the tasks that are assessed comprise, themselves, a learning experience. Thus, the activity on which a student is assessed and assesses him/herself and his/her peers, is, itself, a real-world performance with relevance to the student and to the community. In a fair performance-based assessment system, the student has repeated opportunities to meet or exceed the standards.

Rubric. A scoring guide. A rubric defines the criteria of an assessment system, and establishes the levels of achievement.

Analytic scoring. A system where each criterion of the assessment receives an independent score. Thus, a student's writing may be assessed as gramatically excellent, for instance, at the same time it is assessed as poorly organized. Analytic scoring is especially effective as a diagnostic tool, and serves the classroom best if the scores are not reported as numbers, which can be averaged into a single score, but as words.

Holistic scoring. In holistic scoring, the reader is asked to assign a single score based on an overall impression. A holistic rubric typically defines four or six points on a single scale. The advantage of holistic scoring is its simplicity; its disadvantage is that it offers little diagnostic information.

Descriptors. Short phrases that describe each level of achievement on an assessment scale.

Benchmarks. Pieces of writing that serve as exemplars for each level of achievement on an assessment scale. Often used only by the people conducting the assessment, benchmark pieces should be shared with students and interested parents. In selecting benchmarks, it is important to find work that demonstrates the mid-range of each point on the scale, especially for the highest and lowest points. Selecting the very highest quality work as a benchmark for the highest reported level, for instance, would set an unattainable goal for most students.

Agreement/reliability. When two or more readers score the same piece of writing identically, they are "in agreement." When that score is the same as experts have assigned, the score is "reliable." Assessment systems usually establish a level of agreement that readers must meet, and check readers' reliability using pre-scored pieces. Obtaining inter-rater reliability requires substantial group training, with carefully-worded rubrics, and frequent reference to the benchmark pieces.

Prompt. A "writing starter." A prompt may be a graphic image, the first sentence of a story, a specific topic, or a challenge: "I want you to see if you can write an essay about the importance of voting without using the word 'you.'" Many large-scale writing "assessments" use a prompted writing sample, i.e. a writing test. Although a uniform prompt will generate writing that can usually be scored more reliably than a portfolio can be scored, it may not deliver valid results. Because the portfolio reflects the student's best work over a period of time, it shows what the student can do, and it shows what the student values. A prompted writing sample shows how well a student writes under test-like conditions, and is further limited by whether the prompt happens to engage the student. Bad prompts elicit mediocre writing: comparing the results of annually-administered writing prompts, even when they have been scored reliably, requires careful consideration of the variability of prompts. Portfolios reflect the value or futility of each prompt a student has been given, providing an excellent learning opportunity for the teacher.

APPENDIX : COURSE EVALUATION FROM

COURSE EVALUATION FORM

Instructor's Name:_____

Date:_____ **Course & Section:**_____

Please write a sentence or two about whether and how this course helped you with each of the following. Your answers will help us rethink this course and decide what to keep and to change.

1. **Expressing yourself more clearly in writing:**

2. **Organizing your ideas and writing better:**

3. **Writing more fluently:**

4. **Taking better care of grammar:**

5. **Feeling more confident about writing:**

6. Improving my vocabulary:

7. Improving my style so that my writing is smoother:

Goals set by the instructor: *What has been your experience in relation to the following:*

8. Revision:

9. Giving , receiving, and using feedback:

10. Working cooperatively with classmates in small groups:

11. Learning a variety of ways to get a piece of writing done :

12. Enjoy writing:

Faculty and Administrators would like to know the following:

13. What was the best thing about the class?

14. What was the worst thing about the class?

(Adaptations from Belanoff, Stony Brook....21)